Minutes

OF THE

ORGANIZATION

AND OF THE

PROCEEDINGS

OF THE

1ST 2D AND 3D MEETINGS

OF THE

Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Nebraska.

OMAHA:
Printed by C. F. Brewster, The Printer.
1876.

ORGANIZATION OF SYNOD.

OMAHA, NEB., Sept. 1, 1871.

After spending half an hour in devotional exercises the convention was opened with prayer by the President.

The following ministers presented certificates of dismissal from their respective Synods.

Rev. J. F. Kuhlman.	Rev. S. Aughey.
Rev. J. G. Groenmiller.	Rev. A. G. R. Buetow.
Rev. G. N. H. Peters.	Rev. Ira C. Billman.

The following lay delegates appeared, and were received as representatives of their churches.

Geo. Leamer, Dakota City. Martin Grabe, Rock Port.

Jno. B. Detwiler, Omaha.

By motion the Convention proceeded to organize itself in a Synodical body, by electing the following officers:

President, J. F. Kuhlman.

Secretary, Ira C. Billman.

Treasurer, Jno. B. Detwiler.

Ira C. Billman, on behalf of the Committee on Constitution, presented the Constitution of the Wittenberg Synod, for consideration. This was on motion considered item by item, and finally adopted after various changes had been incorporated.

Rev. Eli Huber, of Nebraska City, was received as a member during the consideration of the Constitution.

After adopting the Constitution, Synod proceeded with its regular business. Rev. A. G. R. Buetow, a licentiate, was ordained on Sabbath evening after an ordination sermon by Rev. Peters. Vacant charges, and new fields of labor received due consideration. A vote of thanks to Alleghany Synod, of Pennsylvania, for the aid extended to this field of labor.

The Secretary was requested to open correspondence with the Board of Home Missions, with a view to procure means and laborers for our extensive and destitute field. The time and place of next meeting to be at Dakota City, on the 1st Thursday of Sept., 1872.

The meeting appointed at Dakota City failed to have a quorum, and consequently no business was transacted. The following members were the only ones with their lay delegates:

Rev. Zimmerman and Kuhlman.

As visiting ministers, there were present Rev. Goodlin, Secretary of the Board of Home Missions; Rev. A. A. Trimper, Agent of Carthage College, Ill.; Rev. Sparr, delegate from the Iowa Synod, and Rev. J. M. Reese of Iowa.

SECOND MEETING OF SYNOD.

By unanimous consent of the members of Synod a meeting was called by the President to convene at Fontenelle, on the eleventh of June, 1874.

The object of the meeting, as set forth in the call, was "to attend to the regular and ordinary business of Synod, and to investigate certain charges preferred against Rev. A. G. R. Buetow, by one of the members of the Fontenelle congregation."

Synod was regularly opened on Friday, June 12th, after a Synodical discourse in german by the President.

The following members were present:

Rev. J. F. Kuhlman, Rev. J. Zimmerman,
" J. G. Groenmiller, " W. A. Lipe,
" C. A. Rueter.

Lay Delegates:

Henry Wilkening. J. G. Heintzelman,

Absent, Rev's Huber, Buetow, Aughey, Billman and Peters.

A quorum being present, the President read his report.

The following officers were elected:
President, W. A. Lipe of Omaha.
Secretary, J. G. Groenmiller of Falls City.
Treasurer, J. F. Kuhlman, Ponca.

The following are some of the changes during the interval that elapsed between the meetings of Synod, as noted by the President's report:—

Rev. Groenmiller vacated the Rock Port charge, and entered on a new field of labor in Nebraska. Rev. Billman left Omaha and went to California, and asks to be dismissed to connect with the Presbyterians. Rev. Buetow left Fontenelle, and is reported at Grand Island.

The Dakota City charge was divided, constituting now Dakota City and Ponca pastorates, the former served by Rev. J. Zimmerman from the Iowa Synod.

The Fontenelle charge has also been divided, Logan, the new charge being served by Rev. Wisswaesser, whilst the vacancy at Fontenelle has been supplied by Rev. Rueter, and Omaha has secured services of Rev. W. A. Lipe.

Several changes in the Constitution were suggested, and were accordingly proposed for adoption by Synod.

Attention was called to Rev. Billman, who left Synod in an irregular and disorderly manner. After due deliberation his name was stricken from the roll.

A recommendation to make the connection of this Synod with the General Synod a fact. Synod complied with the conditions of the Constitution of the General Synod, and elected as delegates to its next convention, Rev. J. F. Kuhlman and Frank Lehmer; alternates, Rev. W. A. Lipe and J. P. Bayha.

The Board of Home Missions was petitioned to appoint and in part sustain a traveling Missionary, Synod pledging itself to raise three hundred dollars towards his support.

The charges against Rev. Buetow were investigated, and after hearing all the evidence, the following action was taken:

WHEREAS,—Charges of a serious nature have been preferred against Rev. A. G. R. Buetow, a member of this Synod, charges that accuse him of immorality; and

WHEREAS—He, the said Buetow, has acted in utter contempt of this Synod, by refusing to comply with its just demands to appear before Synod and relieve himself from the said charges, therefore,

Resolved,—That we the ministers and lay delegates of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Nebraska, met in convention at Fontenelle, Nebraska, this fifteenth day of June, 1874, declare that the charges involving the moral character of A. G. R. Buetow, are of such a grave nature, and have been established beyond reasonable doubt, by the evidence brought before us; as well as by the refusal of said Buetow to answer these charges, and as the said Buetow has treated this Synod with contempt and disrespect by denying its authority, and refusing te obey its summons, thus acting disorderly, and in defiance of our Constitution; we as members of the Nebraska Synod, declare the said A. G. R. Buetow unworthy of the gospel ministry and hereby depose him from that ministry in the Lutheran Church, warning congregation against employing him as pastor, and recognizing any acts he may assume to perform, as a minister of the Lutheran Church, after this date.

It was resolved to meet again as a Synod, on Thursday before the first full moon in September, 1875, at such place as may be determined by the officers of Synod.

Other business relating to the affairs of churches was transacted.

Adjourned to meet as above resolved.

J. G. GROENMILLER, Secretary.

W. A. LIPE, President.

PROCEEDINGS

OF THE

THIRD ANNUAL CONVENTION

OF THE

Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Nebraska.

NEBRASKA CITY, Neb., Sept. 15, 1875.

The members of the Nebraska Synod met on Wednesday evening, in the Lutheran Church, when a discourse was preached in the German language, by Rev. C. L. Wisswaesser.

FIRST SESSION.

THURSDAY, A. M., Sept. 16.

According to adjournment, the Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Nebraska met in the Lutheran Church of Nebraska City, Rev. E. Huber, pastor, on Thursday, September 16, 1875, at 11 o'clock, A. M.

Opened by singing Hymn 449, and reading the 23d Psalm, and prayer by the President.

The following members responded to their names at roll call:

Clerical.

Rev. W. A. Lipe, Omaha. Rev. J. F. Kuhlman, Ponca.
" J. Zimmerman, Dakota City. " E. Huber, Nebraska City.
" J. Groenmiller, Falls City. Prof. S. Aughey, Lincoln.
" C. L. Wisswaesser, Hooper.

Lay Delegates:

Jonas Gise, Omaha. J. Whitehorn, Dahota City.
H. Arendts, Nebraska City. Wm. Laupe, Falls City.

Absent:

Rev. C. A. Rueter, Tecumseh. Rev. G. N. H. Peters.

Rev. Goodlin, Secretary of the Board of Home Missions, and Rev. S. Cook of the Kansas Synod, were received as advising members.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT.

The President read his annual Report:

DEAR BRETHREN:

Through the great mercies of our kind Heavenly Father, we have been permitted to assemble again in Synodical Convention. And first of all, we are called upon to render gratitude to the Giver of all good for the preservation of life and health through the vicisitudes of another year. Our number has not been lessened by death, nor have I learned that any one of our number has removed beyond our bounds, but rather we hope that we shall be augmented at this meeting. The year that has passed since our last meeting has been a very remarkable one, and with the combined influences of the grasshoppers and excessive rains, there has been a financial pressure which has been unequalled for many years; and although our whole country has more or less suffered, yet that portion lying west of the Missouri River has felt the scourge most keenly.

The country being but new in its settlement, the inhabitants had no surplus on hand, and when misfortune came to the growing crops all were helpless; but let us remember that it is God's ruling, and accept the chastisement as from a kind and loving Father.—When we consider the wickedness of the people, their disregard of God's ordinances and his sabbath, we must wonder that he does not destroy them at a single stroke. We should be thankful too, for that active charity which came to our assistance in the hour of need.—Doubtless there were those who were sorely pinched both with hunger and cold, but through the generosity of those whom God had prospered, the greater measure of suffering was forestalled.

These adverse visitations of God dampened our ardor and put a quietus upon our plans of benevolence. Those of our congregations which have not been visited by the plague, have been drawn so heavily upon for the relief of the suffering, that they have been as incapacitated for carrying out church plans of benevolence, as those that personally suffered.

I can say comparatively little concerning the progress of the congregations connected with this Synod. The brethren have not been very lavish in their communications with the President, touching the condition and progress of their fields of labor. As far as I have been informed there has been an encouraging growth.

Soon after the meeting of the Synod in 1874, I wrote Brother Goodlin, the Secretary of the Board of Home Missions, and expressed to him our desire to secure the services of a traveling Missionary, also asking him whether the Board could render us any assistance. On the 29th of June I received a reply to the effect that the Board had neither the authority nor funds to help us.

I doubt not that our delegate to General Synod will be able to report more fully on this matter.

Also, shortly after my return from Synod, I wrote Brother Delo, President of the Synod of Northern Indiana, concerning the standing of Brother Wisswaesser, formerly a licentiate of that Synod, but whose license had not been renewed. On the 2d of September, I received a letter from him, stating that upon the recommendation of several of the brethren he had received ad-interim license, and before the meeting of the Synod he removed to Nebraska, also, that there was nothing standing against him.

Brother Peters states that he united with this Synod as an encouragement, and also to secure to Synod the requisite number of names to entitle it to representation on the floor of General Synod. Since going east he has been engaged on literary work, has not been pastor of a church, and hence no report to submit, he also requests his letter of dismission if his withdrawing will not now deprive us of representation.

On the 20th of October I received a letter from Brother Kuhlman, in which he informed me, that on the 18th he had organized a congregation at West Point, consisting of nineteen members, under very favorable circumstances. This congregation is without supply.

Sometime last spring Rev. Rueter vacated the Fontenelle charge, of which I heard only by accident, as the brother did not inform me. This church is still vacant.

On the 7th of August, 1875, Brother Kuhlman informed me that he again took charge of the Ponca church the 1st of April last.

At the last meeting I was requested to procure a seal for this Synod, which I have done, and which was paid for with funds that were in the hands of J. B. Detwiler, former Treasurer of Synod.

From the minutes of the General Synod, I see that an apportionment for Home Missions has been made to this Synod, and suggest that some action be taken with regard to it.

I would also call the attention of the brethren, to the change of time of the meeting of this Synod, to meet the suggestion of Brother Goodlin, the worthy and efficient Secretary of the Board of Home Missions. The time suggested is the first Wednesday in August.

I have been informed from several sources, that Mr. Buetow, who at our last meeting was deposed from the ministry, has, in defiance of the action of the Synod, sought to represent himself as a minister of the Gospel, and further that he has sought an opportunity to thrust himself upon the church as pastor of a congregation. Now, this is certainly striking a death blow at all ecclesiastical law and order, and if such things are permitted by the church, there is an end of all rule and restraint. Hence, it is hoped that no member of this

Synod will for a moment tolerate such unchristian and ruthless efforts. If any brother has been wronged by action of Synod, there is a way provided to have the grievances redressed, doubling the wrong, never produces the right.

And now, brethren, let us address ourselves with vigor to the work that is before us. We cannot hope to do all that we should like to do, but if we do what we can in the name of the Lord, we shall see his work prosper.

In all our deliberations, let us remamber that we are the servants of the Most High, and that we are brethren. I now return to you the trust which you have committed to my care with the prayer that God may guide us into all truth.

W. A. LIPE, President of Synod.

An election for officers for the ensuing year, resulted as follows:

For President, W. A. Lipe.

For Secretary, J. F. Kuhlman.

For Treasurer, E. Huber.

The minutes of the last annual meeting were read and referred to a Committee.

On motion,

Resolved—That the sessions of Synod open at nine o'clock, A.M., close at twelve M., and open again at two P. M., and close at four and one-half P. M.

SECOND SESSION.

THURSDAY, Sept. 16, 2 o'clock, P. M.

Opened with prayer by Brother Zimmerman.

Minutes of last session read and approved.

The following committees were appointed by the President:

No. 1.—On President's Report, Rev's Huber and Kuhlman.

No. 2.—On last year's minutes, Rev's Groenmiller and Huber.

No. 3.—On minutes of other Synods, Rev. J. Zimmerman and J. Gise.

No. 4.—Sermon and Journal of Brother Wisswaesser, Rev's Huber and Zimmerman.

No. 5.—On Correspondence, Rev's Groenmiller and Wisswaesser.

No. 6.—On Periodicals, Rev. Prof. Aughey and Rev. Huber.

On motion, Rev. Wisswaesser was appointed to make out a full report of the proceedings of Synod, for publication in the Kirchen Freund.

The members of Synod now engaged in a free discussion and interchange of views in regard to the work within the bounds of Synod. The conclusions arrived at are the following:

1st. We have material in almost every town, and throughout every portion of this state, that should be organized into congregations, and be supplied with ministers.

2d. That compared with other denominations, the following facts are evident:

(1) No other denomination has more material.

(2) Not one has accomplished the same results, with the same expenditures of means and labor.

(3) None have more self-sustaining pastorates than we have, and yet,

(4) Our ministers are few in number, and these thrown upon their own resources, while others lack neither in laborers nor in the means to sustain them.

3d. That we need the laborers more urgently than money.

4th. The sad experience that young men in the east are dovoted in advance to the best churches that can be obtained by them in the east, and that therefore,

5th. The churches in our connection must make every effort to raise up their own ministers.

Adjourned with prayer by Brother Huber.

THIRD SESSION.

FRIDAY, Sept. 17, 9 o'clock, A. M.

After spending half an hour in devotional exercises, Synod opened with prayer by Brother Wisswaesser.

Minutes of previous session read and approved.

The President appointed

Committee No. 7, on State of the Church, Rev's J. Zimmerman and J. G. Groenmiller.

Parochial reports were called for, and read and received.

The Treasurer made his report as follows:

TREASURER'S REPORT.

The Treasurer of Synod Dr. to Synodical Treasury:	
1874, To amounts received from Ponca charge,	$10.00
1875, " " Ponca charge,	6.50
	$16.50
Cr. by Cash on hand,	$16.50
To Home Missions Dr.	
To amount from M. Olinger,	$5.00
Cr. by amount on hand,	5.00
To collection for General Synod, Dr.	
To amount received from several churches,	$46.30
Cr. by amount paid delegate,	46.30

Respectfully submitted,

J. F. KUHLMAN, Treasurer.

Report adopted.

The delegates to General Synod, through the chairman, presented their report.

Your Delegate to General Synod would respectfully report:

1st. That he attended the last convention of this body at Baltimore, Md., during the month of May last, and presented the Constitution and Minutes of Synod, together with its action asking for admission into this general body. I am happy to report that our application was readily granted, this Synod admitted as a member of the great family of Synods composing the General Synod, and your delegate admitted to a seat with the full privilege of membership.

2d. Though matters of interest in the transactions of this body will be brought to your notice by the Committee on Minutes of the General Synod, your delegate would call attention to a few items, which in his estimation are of special importance.

(1) The Constitution for District Synods, adopted at this convention, making some important changes in our synodical government; these engrossed more time and called forth more discussion than any other subject that came before the convention.

(2) The action of the Synod on the proposed Colloquium, Synod declining ro proposals of the General Council.

(3) A resolution to the effect that $20,000 be raised annually for Home Mission purposes, as also, that synods take up special collections for General Synod.

(4) The gratifying progress indicated by the reports from our German and Scadinavian work.

(5) But above all I would call attention to the intensely interesting reports of the Boards of Home, and Foreign Missions.

I cannot refrain from urging upon every minister to carefully study these papers, to acquaint the congregations with them, so that the work, the progress, the difficulties, the wants and future prospects of these, the most important agencies of the church, may become better known, and receive the aid and encouragement to which their importance entitles them.

Respectfully Submitted,

J. F. KUHLMAN.

Report adopted.

Adjourned, prayer by Brother Groenmiller.

FOURTH SESSION.

FRIDAY, Sept. 17, 2 o'clock, P. M.

Opened with prayer by Brother Zimmerman.

Minutes of last meeting read and approved.

Committee No. 5 reported:

Committee No. 5 would respectfully report, that the papers placed in their hands are:—

First—A letter from Rev. D. Harbaugh, the delegate of the Kansas Synod to this body. Brother Harbaugh expresses his regret for his inability to be present with us at this time, and conveys the fraternal greetings of the Kansas Synod to this body. Brother Harbaugh expresses a deep desire to have some plan adopted by which the Kansas and Nebraska Synods might co-operate in employing and supporting an Evangelist, or traveling Missionary on their territories. Your committee refer this subject to your prayerful consideration, and recommend favorable action. They also recommend to continue the fraternal intercourse existing between the two Synods, by appointing a delegate to represent us before the Kansas Synod.

The second is a letter from Rev. C. A. Gelwicks, delegate from the English Synod of Iowa. Brother Gelwicks speaks encouragingly of the prospects of his Synod, conveys the fraternal greetings of that body, and regrets his inability to be with us at this meeting. Your committee recommend that we reciprocate the fraternal feelings of the Iowa Synod, rejoice in their prosperity, and continue fraternal intercourse with them.

Report adopted.

In regard to item first of the report, it was

Resolved,—That we favor the appointment of a traveling Missionary, and the officers of Synod are hereby made a committee to confer with the Kansas Synod, and make such arrangement as may be necessary to carry into effect the object contemplated, namely: the services of a suitable person to labor as a Missionary.

Committee No. 1 reported:

Your committee to whom was referred the Annual Report of the President, find in it the following items that claim the attention of Synod:—

1st. The case of Brother Wisswaesser, a licentiate of this body.

2d. The request of Brother Peters to be dismissed from this Synod.

3d. The vacant congregations at Fontenelle and West Point.

4th. The apportionment by General Synod for Home Missions.

5th. The case of Mr. Buetow, who notwithstanding his deposition continues to act as a minister of the gospel.

In regard to these several items, your committee recommend

1. That Brother Wisswaesser be ordained.

2. That the request of Brother Peters be granted.

3. That the President and Secretary of Synod constitute a committee to secure suitable ministers for the vacant congregations at Fontenelle and West Point.

4. That a committee be appointed to assess the amount required of our Synod by the General Synod, upon the churches belonging to our body, determining the respective amounts by the numbers and pecuniary ability of the various charges, said committee to report their apportionment to Synod at this meeting for final action.

5. That the advice of the President, to do nothing whereby we recognize Mr. Buetow as a minister of the gospel, be heeded by all the members and congregations connected with this Synod.

Your committee also recommend that the earnest admonition of the President, "that the members of Synod engage with renewed zeal and diligence, in the work of the Master," be seriously taken to heart.

E. Huber,
J. F. Kuhlman.

Report adopted item by item.

Item first was referred to the ministerium.

Complying with item 4, the President appointed an apportionment committee consisting of Rev. J. G. Groenmiller and C. L. Wisswaesser.

Committee No. 3 reported as follows:

Committee No. 3 would respectfully report that the documents placed in their hands are: the Minutes of the Synod of Kansas, of the Synod of Iowa, and of the Synod of Northern Illinois.

Your committee find nothing in these minutes claiming any special action of this body.

J. ZIMMERMAN.
J. GISE.

Report adopted.

Adjourned with prayer by the President.

FIFTH SESSION.

SATURDAY, Sept. 18, 9 o'clock, A. M.

After spending half an hour in devotional exercises, Synod opened with prayer by Brother Groenmiller.

Minutes of previous meeting read and approved.

Committee No. 6 reported as follows:

1st. The Proceedings of the 27th Convention of the General Synod.

2d. The Quarterly Review of the Evangelical Lutheran Church, edited by Drs. J. A. Brown and N. Valentine.

3d. The Augsburg Teacher and Augsburg Lesson Leaves.

In regard to the first we find a resolution on page 20, calling the attention of District Synods to the duty of taking up a collection once in each year in the month of April, for the treasury of the General Synod. We recommend that this be done.

With reference to the Review, we recommend the following: inasmuch as the Quarterly Review of the Lutheran Church is, in the ability with which it is conducted, the peer of the best Theological Quarterlies in the land, and as it is especially dovoted to the discussion of Lutheran Theology and kindred subjects, and is thus satisfying a felt need in the church, therefore,

Resolved,—That we give this Quarterly our hearty support, and do our utmost to extend its circulation among our intelligent laymen. In reference to the Augsburg Teacher and Lesson Leaves, we recommend the following:

WHEREAS—The Augsburg Teacher and the Lesson Leaves are equal, if not superior to the best of this class of publications, and they are better adapted to the wants of our Sunday Schools than any other, therefore,

Resolved,—That we labor to introduce these publications into our Sunday Schools and among our people.

SAMUEL AUGHEY.
ELI HUBER.

Report adopted.

Synod now resolved itself into a Ministerium to attend to such matters as according to the Constitution are subjects for this body.—See ministerial proceedings.

Adjourned as a Synod with prayer by Brother Huber.

SIXTH SESSION.

SATURDAY, Sept. 18, 2 o'clock, P. M.

Opened with prayer by the Secretary.

Minutes of previous Session read and approved.

Committee No. 2 reported.

Your committee to whom were referred the minutes of last year's meeting of this Synod, find the following items that claim attention at this time:

The following amendments to the Constitution were proposed.

1st. In the preamble, strike out the words, "as received and understood by the General Synod."

2d. In Section 2 of Article II, insert the word "ordained" before the word "minister," wherever the latter word occurs in the section.

Your committee recommend the adoption of these amendments.

Respectfully Submitted.

J. G. GROENMILLER.
C. L. WISSWAESSER.

The report was adopted item by item.

The proposed amendments were ratified and declared part of the Constitution.

The committee on the State of the Church, reported as follows.

Whilst the condition of our church in Nebraska is not as encouraging as we might desire, yet we have abundant reasons for gratitude on account of the evident progress that has been made in many of our charges.

The attendance in some of our congregations has greatly increased prayer meetings have been maintained with interest, and an encouraging number has been added to the church, although no special revivals have been reported from any of the congregations.

Several pastors have succeeded in forming very encouraging catechetical classes, and material for building up the church seems abundant in most places. Great obstacles, however, present themselves in working up this material, and fitting it for the temple of the living God. To do the work of the Master more efficiently, we

need a more thorough consecration to this work, willing to be used as God would use us. Anxious to use every means whereby we can glorify God and increase his kingdom, endeavoring in every way to make the church that active, powerful and aggressive body in the world that she ought to be, and no doubt will be when she will arise fair as the moon, bright as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners.

J. ZIMMERMAN.

Report adopted.

On motion, the officers of Synod were constituted an advisory committee on Home Missions to co-operate with the Board of Home Missions of the General Synod.

Report from delegate to Kansas Synod:

Your delegate was prevented from meeting with this body, but wrote a letter expressing the fraternal feelings of this Synod.

J. G. GROENMILLER.

Committee on apportionment reported.

Your committee respectfully submit the following as the amounts that should be raised by the several charges for Home Missions:

Omaha,	$40.00
Nebraska City,	40.00
Logan,	24.00
Falls City,	16.60
Dakota City,	15.84
Ponca,	12.00
Fontenelle,	11.20
Total,	$159.64

J. G. GROENMILLER:
C. L. WISSWAESSER.

The report was adopted.

Delegates to corresponding bodies:

The following delegates were appointed:—

Rev. W. A. Lipe to Kansas Synod.

Rev. Zimmerman to Iowa Synod.

Rev. Groenmiller to Northern Illinois Synod.

Rev Aughey to Central Illinois Synod.

Time and place of next meeting:

The first Thursday in August, 1876, was fixed as the time, and Omaha as the place of next meeting.

The following amendment was proposed:

That the words "and adjacent states" be stricken out of the name of this Synod.

On Motion,

Resolved,—That all monies for benevolent purposes be sent to the Treasurer of Synod, and, by him be applied to the objects for which they were collected.

The Secretary was instructed to make a condensed synopsis of the proceedings of former meetings of this Synod, to have the same printed, together with the Constitution and full proceedings of this session, and to have two hundred copies printed for distributioh among our members.

After a vote of thanks to the congregation, whose hospitality Synod had enjoyed during the meeting, the reading and adopting of the minutes, Synod united in prayer with the president, and adjourned to meet at Omaha, on the first Thursday in August, 1876.

J. F. KUHLMAN, Sec. W. A. LIPE, Pres.

MINISTERIAL SESSION.

FRIDAY, Sept. 18, 9:30 o'clock, A. M.

Called to order by the President.

Members present:

W. A. Lipe, Chairman,	J. F. Kuhlman, Sec.
J. G. Groenmiller,	J. Zimmerman,
E. Huber,	S. Aughey.

Rev. Wisswaesser, our licentiate, was requested to remain.

Committee No. 4, to whom were committed the papers of Bro. Wisswaesser, reported favorably and recommended his ordination.

The report, and the item referred to the ministerium from report on President's report, namely, "that Brother Wisswaesser be ordained," were taken into serious consideration. Brother Wisswaesser was admitted to a colloquium, the brethren having satisfied themselves in regard to his qualifications and character, it was

Resolved, — That Brother Wisswaesser be ordained Sunday evening.

Adjourned, prayer by Prof. Aughey.

Accorning to resolution, Rev. C. L. Wisswaesser was, on Sunday evening, Sept. 19, after an excellent sermon by Rev. Goodlin, solemnly ordained to the work of the Gospel, by the laying on of hands, the officers of the Synod officiating.

J. F. KUHLMAN, Sec. W. A. LIPE, Pres.

CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS

OF THE

Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Nebraska.

We the ministers and lay delegates of the Lutheran Churches in Nebraska, accepting the doctrinal basis of the General Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Churches in the United States, and holding with the Evangelical Churches of our fathers, the word of God as contained in the Canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as the only infallible rule of faith and practice, and the Augsburg Confession as a correct exhibition of the fundamental doctrines of the Divine Word, and the faith of our church as founded on that word, and also Luther's Smaller Catechism, adopt for ourselves the following

CONSTITUTION.

ARTICLE I.

Sec. 1. This Synod shall be known by the title of Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Nebraska. It shall be Composed of ordained ministers, licentiates, and of lay delegates who subscribe to this Constitution, and of all others who may be hereafter received.

Sec. 2. Each pastoral dsitrict shall have the right to send one lay delegate to Synod, who shall be entitled to all the rights and privileges of a member.

Sec. 3. Ministers in good standing in other Synods or in any sister churches, who may be present, may be received as advisory members.

Sec. 4. A delegate from any other Evangelical Lutheran Synod, shall have all the privileges of a regular member of this body, at the meeting to which he is appointed by his Synod, to appear as its representative, except he shall have no vote.

Sec. 5. It shall be the duty of this Synod, to see that the rules of government and discipline adopted by it, are observed by all the congregations and ministers within its bounds; to receive appeals

from decisions of church councils and special conferences, when regularly brought before it, and review and reverse or confirm the decisions to which they refer; to examine and decide on all charges against ministers and licentiates, that of heterodoxy alone excepted, (this being the duty of the Ministerium.) To this end the Synod and Ministerium shall have power to cite any church members within its bounds to appear before them, and to endeavor to obtain other witnesses when the case may require it. It shall also be its duty to change and form pastoral districts; to attend to any business relating to the churches regularly brought before it; to provide supplies for destitute congregations, and to devise and execute all suitable measures for the promotion of piety, and the general prosperity of the church not otherwise provided for in the Formula.

Sec. 6. If any congregation in connection with this Synod should refuse to observe the Constitution of this Synod, and the Formula of Government, it shall be excluded from connection with Synod during the time of its refusal; nor shall any minister or licentiate belonging to this Synod, take charge of it without special permission from the President. Provided, however, that if the charter of an incorporate congregation be at variance with any articles of the formula of gorermment, said charter shall have precedence of those articles with which it is in conflict, if the charter be not in violation of the spirit of the formula; in which case, when any such violation is so declared by the Synod, such congregation shall take all suitable measures to effect, if possible, necessary alterations in the charter.

Sec. 7. Any congregation situated within the bounds of this Synod may become connected with it, by acceding to the provisions of this Constitution, and making contributions towards defraying the necessary expenses of the Synod. For this purpose an annual collection shall be taken in each congregation.

Sec. 8. At least one meeting of Synod shall be held every year at such time and place as may have been determined on, and special meetings may at any time be called by the President, with the consent of one-third of the ordained ministers, care shall be taken, however, that seasonable notice be given to the ministers and congregations connected with this Synod.

Sec. 9. If any congregation in connection with this Synod shall, without the consent of this body, receive as its pastor, a minister who has been expelled from any regular ecclesiastical body, or who is not acknowledged by this body, and shall refuse to dismiss said individual when advised to do so by the Synod, or its President, it shall be excluded from our connection.

ARTICLE II.—OFFICERS OF SYNOD.

Sec. 1. The officers of this Synod shall be a President a Secretary and Treasurer, the two former shall also be officers of the Ministerium.

Sec. 2. All these officers shall be annually chosen by ballot, by a majority of the whole of the votes of the ordained ministers, licentiates and lay delegates, present. The President and Secretary shall be ordained ministers regularly belonging to this Synod, the Treasurer may be either an ordained minister or any one of the members of a congregation connected with this Synod.

Sec. 3. The President shall deliver a synodical discourse at the meeting of every Synod; and he shall in connection with the pastor of the place, appoint the other individuals who are to preach during session.

Sec. 4. He shall at the beginning of every Synod, make a written report of all the official business transacted, and the official letters received by him since the last meeting, and of all important events which have occurred, relating to Synod, and may recommend, for consideration, any measures which he may deem necessary, or calculated to promote the cause of religion. This report shall be laid on the table, and shall be dealt with as all other papers coming before this body.

Sec. 5. He shall preside at all the meetings of the Synod and Ministerium.

Sec. 6. The President has a right to take part in the discussions as well as any other member. When the house is equally divided on any question, he has the casting vote; in all other cases he has no suffrage, except when an election is made by ballot, and then he has not the casting vote.

Sec. 7. The President shall preserve order; not suffer more than one member to speak at a time; secure to each person liberty to speak without interruption from others, and shall prevent a speaker from deviating from the subject before the house.

Sec. 8. The President shall take care that each subject be duly considered, before a decision be made. He shall distinctly rehearse each motion when no one has any farther observations to offer, and take the vote of the house on the same.

Sec. 9. When the votes on motions are called for, they are to be given simply by "yea" and "nay," and no farther motions are then admissible.

Sec. 10. The President has the appointment of all committees, which are not to be elected by ballot or otherwise, and every motion for the formation of a committee, shall specify in what way it is to be formed.

Sec. 11. It is an important part of his duty to give counsel to every member of Synod, when he deems it expedient, and particularly to admonish and advise every erring brother. If accusation has been lodged against any member, according to Chap. III, Sec. 5 of the Formula, or if he has sufficient reasons to believe that any minister or licentiate is living in material violation of the rules of the formula, it shall be his duty to call upon the individual to relieve his character from said imputation before the Synod or Ministerium.

Sec. 12. Should the President remove from the limits of this Synod, or depart this life, then the Secretary shall succeed him and discharge the duties of the President until the next meeting of Synod.

Sec. 13. The President shall be authorized until within four months of the synodical meeting, to grant license to persons who are recommended by four ordained ministers, members of this body. But he shall not, at any time during the recess of Synod, grant license to applicants who are members of other denominations.

Sec. 14. It shall be the duty of the President to appoint supplies for all vacant congregations during the recess of Synod.

Sec. 15. The Secretary shall keep a faithful and accurate account of all the proceedings of the Synod and Ministerium; write in the record containing the Constitution and By-Laws, any amendments or additions made to the same; carefully preserve all the papers, the seal, &c., of Synod, subject to its directions, and shall do all the official writing of the Synod not otherwise provided for.

Sec. 16. He shall give notice, either by circular, or in the religious papers of our church, as Synod may direct, to each minister and licentiate belonging to this Synod, of the time and place of the synodical meeting, at least six weeks previous to the time appointed.

Sec. 17. He is to keep a register of the names of all the ministers and licentiates, arranged according to the age in office, and also of congregations, whether vacant or not, connected with the Synod.

Sec. 18. If the accumulation of business should render it necessary, the President may appoint an Assistant Secretary, whose office should expire at the close of the meeting of Synod.

Sec. 19. If in the recess of Synod, the Secretary should remove into the bounds of another Synod, or should depart this life, the President shall require the archives, the seal, and all other property of Synod to be delivered to him, and shall retain charge of them until

the next session of Synod, when he shall appoint a Secretary *pro tem.*

Sec. 20. Unless the archives are otherwise disposed of by Synod they shall be in the charge and custody of the Secretary. Any minister or delegate of a congregation connected with this Synod, shall have free access to them, but no part of them shall be allowed to be taken away or destroyed.

Sec. 21. The Treasurer shall take charge of all the moneys belonging to the Synod and shall keep them subject to its orders. He shall keep and present at each annual meeting, a detailed and faithful account of the state of the treasury. An order from the President attested by the Secretary shall be a sufficient voucher for money paid by him out of the Treasury.

ARTICLE III—PERTAINING TO MEMBERS.

Sec. 1. It is the duty of every ordained minister, licentiate, and lay delegate of this Synod, not only to observe the provisions of this Constitution himself, but also so far as it is in his power, see that it be obeyed by all connected with it.

Sec. 2. No minister or licentiate shall preach or perform other ministerial duties in the charge of another minister except by his consent or request, or except by consent of Synod.

Sec. 3. Any minister or licentiate in good standing who removes from the bounds of this synod into those of another, shall, on application to the President receive a certificate under his signature, of his honorable dismission and such certificate shall be required by this Synod of every member of any other Synod who applies for admission.

Sec. 4. Every ordained minister has the right to leave his charge and remove to another whenever he believes it his duty to do so, yet he must give the President timely notice of his intended removal.

Sec. 5. A licensed candidate shall have liberty to visit vacant charges either upon receiving an invitation from them, or upon the advice of Synod or President.

Sec. 6. After a licentiate has a stated charge he shall be restricted to it, and shall not resign it without the consent of the Ministerium, or in its recess, of the President.

Sec. 7. A licentiate has power to perform all the ministerial functions during the time specified in his license.

Sec. 8. In addition to the duties of ministers, specified in Chap. III of the Formula, it is the duty of licentiates particularly to devote

all their leisure time to their personal improvement in knowledge and grace, to receive counsel from the President and to apply to him for advice in cases of difficulty.

Sec. 9. Every licentiate must keep a general journal of his ministerial acts, which, with a few sermons of his own composition, he must deliver or send to the Ministerium. He shall also present at every annual meeting of this body, previous to his ordination a certificate of his conduct and his doctrine signed by the elders and deacons of his charge.

Sec. 10. Each lay delegate entitled to a seat by this constitution shall have equal rights with the ministers in all business belonging to Synod; that is, may take part in the debates, offer resolutions and vote on all synodical questions.

ARTICLE IV—ORDER OF BUSINESS.

Sec. 1. At the time appointed for the meeting the members present shall assemble, and if four ordained ministers and two lay delegates be present they shall constitute a quorum.

Sec. 2. The president shall open the first session with prayer after the brethren have unitedly sung a hymn. In the absence of the President the Secretary shall make the first prayer, and if he also be absent one of the elder ministers shall do so.

Sec. 3. The session shall be conducted as follows:

1. Singing and prayer.
2. Calling the roll.
3. Reading of the minutes of the previous meeting.
4. Reception of applicants for membership, lay and clerical delegates and advisory members.
5. President report.
6. Treasurer's report.
7. Election of officers.
8. Reception of documents and papers.
9. Appointment of committees.

(1) Committee on President's report.
(2) Auditing committee.
(3) Committee on parochial reports.
(4) Committee on minutes of other Synods.
(5) Committee on minutes of last meeting.
(6) Committee on journals and sermons of licentiates.
(7) Committee for examination of applicants for licensure and ordination.
(8) Special committees to whom shall be referred all other papers.

10. Reports of standing committees, directors of college and delegates to other bodies.

11. Reports of committees appointed at the present session.

12. Unfinished business.

13. New business, including resolutions, vacant congregations home and foreign missions, education, appointment of delegates, directors, members to preach on appointed subjects, the time and place of next meeting, &c.

14. Announcement of ministerial session.

15. Motion for adjournment.

16. Prayer.

Sec. 4. Each minister shall be called on by the Secretary for a record of persons baptized and confirmed as well as the communing members belonging to his churches as also of the number of schools; other items may be from time to time added to the parochial reports.

Sec. 5. Should the President or Secretary be absent at the proper time for opening a session, the members present may elect others *pro tem.*

ARTICLE V—PROCEEDINGS AGAINST A MINISTER.

Sec. 1. As the honor and success of the Gospel depend very much on the character of its ministers, every Synod ought to guard with the utmost care and impartiality the conduct of its members.

Sec. 2. All Christians should be very cautious in giving credit or circulation to an ill report of any man and especially of a minister of the Gospel. If any man knows a minister to be guilty of a private censurable fault, he should warn him in private. If this prove fruitless, he should apply to the church council who shall proceed as specified in Chap. 3, Sec. 5 of the Formula.

Sec. 3. If accusation be lodged according to Chap. 3, Sec. 5 of the Formula, with the President, within four months of the time of the next synodical meeting, he shall defer the matter to said meeting; yet if the charge be one of drunkenness, lewdness, circulating fundamental error in doctrine, or higher crime, he shall immediately direct the accused to suspend all ministerial duties, until his case is decided. If such accusation is lodged with the President at an earlier date, he shall, if the charge be one of drunkenness, lewdness, circulating fundamental error in doctrine, or higher crime, immediately give notice to all the members of the conference district to which the accused belongs, to meet without delay at a suitable place, and institute a formal investigation of the case, according to the principles of the Formula. The chairman of said conference district shall im-

mediately fix the time and place of the meeting, and give at least fifteen days notice of the same to each minister in the district and also to the parties concerned.

Sec. 4. If the Synod is not divided into conference districts, the President shall appoint a committee of three ordained ministers and fix the time and place of their meeting, and give all the notices above required, of the chairman of the conference district.

Sec. 5. Any three members of the conference or of the committee above named, shall have power to proceed and hold a fair and impartial investigation of the case, and to take all such measures as may be necessary to determine the guilt or innocence of the accused.

Sec. 6. If the accused confess, and the matter be base and flagitious, such as drunkenness, lewdness, circulating fundamental errors in doctrine or a higher crime, however penitent he may be, he must immediately be suspended from the exercise of his office; and if thought expedient, a time may be appointed for him publicly to confess to the congregation and the world his guilt and penitence.

Sec. 7. If a minister accused of atrocious crimes being duly notified, refuses to attend the investigation, he shall still be immediately suspended from his office.

Sec. 8. If the accused deny the charge and yet on examination of the eveidence, be found guilty, the conference or committee shall nevertheless proceed to pass sentence upon him.

Sec. 9. The highest punishment that can be inflicted by a special conference or a committee appointed as above specified, is suspension from clerical functions, and this sentence is to be reported to the next meeting of Synod, and remain in force until reversed by the Synod or Ministerium as the case may be.

Sec. 10. Any minister intending to appeal from the decision of a conference or committee shall give notice of it to his accusers within three weeks of the time when the decision was made, that both parties may be prepared for a new trial.

Sec. 11. Special conferences, not specially convened for the purpose, may attend to any charge of importance against a minister within their bounds, if all the parties concerned are prepared and willing to proceed.

Sec. 12. If at any time accusation be lodged with the President, according to Chap. 3, Sec. 5 of the Formula, for a less crime than those specified in Sec. 3 above, he shall take no other steps in the case than to write a letter to the accused and accusers, exhorting them to mutual forbearance and referring them to the next Synod.

Sec. 13. If accusation against a minister be made immediately to Synod, and the Synod believe itself to be in possession of all the evidence necessary to a just decision, the case may be immediately examined and sentence passed. But if the necessary evidence be not before it, and the crime be such as specified in Sec. 3 above, it shall appoint a meeting of the conference to which the accused belongs, or, if there be no conference district, of a committee, who shall proceed as above specified.

Sec. 14. If a minister be found guilty of gross immorality, or circulating fundamental errors in doctrine, his sentence of suspension shall not be removed until he shall give satisfactory evidence of penitence and reformation, and his restoration shall be by the same judiciary which suspended him, or on their recommendation.

Sec. 15. If the common report of a minister's guilt of any of the charges above specified be such as to seriously injure the cause of religion, and his own churches do not proceed against him, it shall be the duty of any other minister or layman, having obtained two other signatures of creditable men, to report the case to the President.

ARTICLE VI—VACANT CONGREGATIONS.

Sec. 1. Vacant congregations which cannot be immediately supplied with a minister are directed to assemble on the Lord's day, to select some member of the church of suitable capacities and character to conduct the exercises and engage in the worship of God.

Sec. 2. It is also recommended that at these meetings a portion of the Scriptures, of the prayers contained in the Liturgy, or some select and approved sermons be read.

ARTICLE VII—MISSIONS AND BENEFICIARY EDUCATION.

Sec. 1. Vacant congregations which cannot be immediately supplied, as well as all others, shall regard it as a solemn duty to extend the Redeemer's Kingdom by educating men of respectable character for the Gospel ministry, and by supporting home and foreign missions.

Sec. 2. It shall therefore be the duty of every member of this Synod to instruct the people on this important subject, seek, and put in a course of instruction, proper candidates for the sacred office, and collect funds for missions and beneficiary education.

Sec. 3. A committee consisting of three ministers and two laymen shall be annually appointed to receive and appropriate all funds

for beneficiary education, to receive applicants and to direct their education according to the principles of the Parent Education Society and their own discretion, when not otherwise directed by Synod. The chairman of this committee shall also be its treasurer, and the committee shall make annual and detailed reports to Synod of their transactions and propose such plans for future action as they may deem expedient.

ARTICLE VIII—ELECTION OF DELEGATES.

Sec. 1. The election of clerical delegates to the General Synod shall be confined to ordained ministers, and they shall be elected by ballot.

ARTICLE IX—SPECIAL CONFERENCES.

Sec. 1. This Synod shall be divided into two or more districts for the purpose of holding special conferences.

Sec. 2. There shall at least be held one conference in each district; in case the residences of the members are too remote to allow of more frequent meetings; and it shall be continued at least two days. The chief object, in addition to the transaction of such ecclesiastical business as may properly come before conference, is, to labor for the conversion of sinners, and the edification of believers, by the preaching of the Gospel.

Sec. 3. The state of religion in the churches of the district ought to be inquired into, and at least an hour be spent by the conference in conversation on subjects relating to pastoral experience.

Sec. 4. These conferences ought to be held alternately in some congregation of each minister in the district.

Sec. 5. Special conferences may examine into any business of congregations, which is regularly referred to them, and give advice; but no conference shall under any pretext whatever, perform any business connected with the licensure or ordination of candidates for the ministry, unless previously authorized by a special resolution of Synod.

Sec. 6. Lay delegates may be sent to these conferences, under the same regulations as to Synod.

ARTICLE X—MINISTERIAL SESSION.

Sec. 1. A meeting shall be held consisting exclusively of ministers for the purpose of attending to those duties which Christ and his

Apostles enjoined upon them alone, viz: examination, licensure and ordination of candidates for the ministry or presbytery, by which in Scripture is meant ministers alone.

Sec. 2. Licensed candidates shall have no vote in the ministerial session, and shall withdraw whenever required by the ordained ministers.

Sec. 3. The Ministerium shall also be the proper body to whom all charges of heresy against a minister, are to be examined and decided, as also all appeals from the decisions of a church council on a charge of heresy against a layman, or from the decisions of a special conference, on a similar charge, against a minister.

Sec. 4. When ordained ministers of bther denominations make application for admission into connection with this Synod, the Ministerium shall be the body to decide on the case.

Sec. 5. A majority of two-thirds of the ordained ministers shall be required for the licensure of an applicant, or the renewal of his license, or the ordination of a licensed candidate, or the admission of an ordained minister from another denomination.

Sec. 6. All ministers from foreign countries, applying for membership in this Synod, with proper credentials, under seal, may be received as licentiates or into full connection, as the case may demand.

Sec. 7. All business not especially entrusted to the Ministerium in this Constitution, shall belong to the Synod.

Sec. 8. The order of business in the Ministerium, shall be as follows:

1. After the session has been opened with prayer, the President shall communicate any business which he may have to report or propose.
2. The licentiates shall hand in their license sermons and journals, which ought, if possible, be read by the licentiate, before the whole body. If want of time renders this inconvenient, a committee should be appointed to examine and report on the same.
3. Applicants for licensure are examined.
4. After the examination of the applicants, and of the sermons and journals of licentiates, the applicants and licentiates may be requested to withdraw, and the question of their licensure or renewal of license or ordination, be discussed and decided.
5. The licensure and ordination may be performed, either in the Ministerium, or at an appointed hour before a promiscuous assembly, provided the ordination of a licentiate is not directed by the Synod to take place in his own congregation.

6. Promiscuous matters, relative to ministerial business, may then be attended to.

7. Sometime may then be occupied in conversation on pastoral experiences.

8. Session closed with prayer.

ARTICLE XI—EXAMINATION AND LICENSURE OF CANDIDATES.

Sec. 1. The examination shall be conducted by an examining committee of two or more ordained ministers, appointed for that purpose. As these examinations may be highly interesting and useful to the whole ministerium, and will be more faithfully performed if public, it is earnestly recommended that they be performed before the whole body of Synod.

Sec. 2. After the examination by the committee is ended, every member of the Ministerium has the right to ask the applicant any additional questions.

Sec. 3. The examination shall embrace, at least the following subjects, viz: Personal piety and motives for seeking the Gospel ministry, the original languages, Greek and Hebrew, of the inspired Scriptures, natural and revealed Theology, the Evidences of Christianity, Church History, Pastoral Theology, Homillitics and Church Government.

Sec. 4. The Ministerium shall not, in any case whatever, license an individual whom they do not believe to be hopefully pious, nor shall any applicant—extraordinary cases excepted—be licensed, whom the Ministerium do not find possessed of a competent acquaintance with the subjects named in Sec. 3, the Hebrew language alone excepted.

Sec. 5. The ceremony of licensure shall be performed according to the form prescribed in the Liturgy of the General Synod.

ARTICLE XII—ORDINATION.

Sec. 1. Whenever the Ministerium has decided that an individual shall be ordained, the ceremony may be performed either at the time by the assembled Ministerium, or in the church by which he has been called; by the special conference, or by a committee appointed for that purpose, by the President, agreeably to a special resolution adopted by the Ministerium.

Sec. 2. The ceremony of ordination shall be performed according to the form prescribed in the Liturgy of the General Synod.

Sec. 3. If the ordination is performed in a church to which the candidate is called, the presiding minister may proceed without any interruption, with the ceremony of Installation.

ARTICLE XIII—INSTALLATION.

Sec. 1. Pastors may be installed according to the Liturgy of the General Synod, by a committee appointed by the President for that purpose, at any time, said committee may be nominated by the Pastor to be installed.

ARTICLE XIV—BY-LAWS AND ALTERATION OF THE CONSTITUTION.

Sec. 1. This Synod may, at any regular meeting, adopt such By-Laws as circumstances may require, provided that they are not inconsistent with any of the provisions of this Constitution.

Sec. 2. Any alteration of any portion of this Constitution, or any addition of a new Chapter or Section may be made, or any portion may be omitted; provided that such alteration, addition or omission be set forth in writing at the annual meeting of Synod, in the precise words which are to be altered, added, or omitted, and incorrated in the minutes; and provided that at the next annual meeting of Synod, two-thirds of all the members agree to the proposed change.